

RECORDING OF PROCEEDINGS

Wyoming Board of Agriculture Minutes
February 22, 2006
Wyoming Department of Agriculture Conference Room

Members Present:

Helen Jones, President
Spencer Ellis, Vice President
Lee Otto
Jim Mickelson
Gene Hardy
Jack Corson
John Etchepare, Director, WY Dept. of Agriculture
Paige Smith, Governor Freudenthal's Office

Youth Advisory Committee:

David Largent
Emily Horton
Leif Udem

Members Absent:

David Graham
Frank Galey, Dean, UW College of Agriculture

WDA Staff Present:

Muff Parker, Recording Secretary
Jim Schwartz

Approval of Minutes

Gene Hardy made a motion to approve the minutes from October 27, November 2, November 16, December 7, December 21, 2005, January 4, January 18, January 23, February 1, and February 15, 2006 with the following changes noted "The December 21, 2005 minutes need to read as follows: page 2, 5th paragraph "Gene attended Glenrock meeting and said about 100 people were there and did not support the acquisition. He did not attend the Casper meeting but only about 30 so people attended and they did support the acquisition". Jim Mickelson seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

Taxation Update

Tom Roberts from the State Board of Equalization explained the taxation process for agriculture land.

Seed Lab Pricing

Gil Waibel, the State Seed Analyst, talked about the need to promulgate new rules regarding the price list. **Jack Corson made a motion to accept the seed pricing as recommended by the SLAG Committee to increase fees by 5% in addition to the 11.1%, except beans and alfalfa, to include the policies and attached price list. Seconded by Spencer Ellis. All voted in favor. Motion carried.**

Legislative Update

John and Jim gave a progress update on the bill remaining.

Hugh Duncan Ranch Purchase Update

Lynne Boomgaarden, State Lands Director, explained some of the details of the recent purchase of the Hugh Duncan Ranch near Douglas. She encouraged everyone to accept that the purchase has been made and help her office whenever possible to make positive changes regarding the use of the

newly acquired property. She doesn't foresee any changes in their policy to acquire larger parcels in exchange for smaller ones. Their short term plan is to have policies in place to remain that way until

they can develop a long term plan of use. At the April 13 Board of Land Commission's meeting, she said they will probably close public access until a long term plan can be put in place. Mr. Duncan will remain on the land through a lease agreement. They will also probably issue a temporary use permit for those presently using the agricultural resources on the land. Gates will be locked and nobody will be allowed on the property without permission and a permit issued by State Lands. They are looking at a year to develop a long term plan. Her recommendation in April will include the Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) process be used.

Bryce Reece would like to have the Board of Agriculture revisit this again at their April meeting because he feels the state is competing with your people for agriculture lands.

Muddy Creek Feedground

Terry Cleveland, Director of Wyoming Game and Fish said the Pinedale herd unit management is in place and the other six should be in place in 2007. Trapping and testing of elk was implemented at the Muddy Creek Feedground. Those testing positive had been shipped to Idaho. They are finished with this year's testing because the elk are moving into their third trimester.

Conservation District Funding for the 06-07 FY

Dani Sullivan, Administrative Specialist with the Natural Resources and Policy Section handed out the reporting totals and explained all thirty-four districts had completed the requirement for funding. The Wyoming Association of Conservation District's recommended the Board approve all districts for funding. **Jim Mickelson made a motion to award all thirty-four districts the state base funding as appropriated by the legislature. Seconded by Lee Otto. All voted in favor. Motion carried.**

Conservation District Appointment

Gene Hardy made a motion to appoint Casey Styvar to the urban position vacated with the resignation of Richard Craddock. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

Living Legacy Program Update

Helen Jones asked each of the members to visit with their counties to ask them to donate to trees to the program. She would like to have each member give an update at the next conference call.

Award

John presented Polly Cross with her 20 year certificate.

Farm Services Update

Lois Van MARK talked about the re-organization of FSA last summer and the closing and combining of some of the county offices. She knows this makes it difficult on the producers, but feels they will have better service overall because of these consolidations. Lois was very willing to work with producers to help with the transition of the restructure.

Awards

John presented Meghan Lally and Leif Udem with their clocks noting the Department's appreciation for their service on the Board.

Natural Resources Conservation Service Update

Aldopho Perrez, the new State Conservationist, introduced himself and talked about his vision. He is very excited to see the young farmers and ranchers become more involved in agriculture. He's like to see them get involved with the 07 Farm Bill and have an impact. Helen asked if he'd be willing to

help draft a letter to the Congressional delegation, he agreed and emphasized the youth voice would be well received in Washington. David and Emily will work with Mr. Perrez on the issue of young producers. Jim Schwartz talked about a youth forum at the end of March. Aldopho also feels we need to plan to help those who get in trouble with BLM. He would like to see, for example, a certified plan for AFO's and CAFO's that would be a safety blanket for the ranchers. He would also like to see his employees as technologically educated to be able to help.

Small Water Projects

Bobbie Frank told the board about the bill in the legislature and the amendments to which would require a Level 1 watershed study on any project; whether it is private or public land. The watershed must have physical impairments. Ron Vore with the WWDC platted the successful projects funded by the Water Development Commission.

Issues

- The deadline for application to the Youth Advisory Committee is March 1.
- The Grizzly Bear comment period was extended so Helen asked the members if they should send comments. Justin Williams explained the boundaries and the difficulties facing the delisting. John feels the comments need to be specific to the areas, numbers, morality thresholds, etc. Justin said he would be willing to work with Jack Corson to prepare comments.

Animal ID Update

Lee Romsa, State Brand Commission, said that nationally they are stuck on who will be tracking – state, national, or some entity. There are presently 204,000 premises' registered nationally. 250-300 premises' registered voluntarily in Wyoming. One of the biggest questions is who is going to pay for all of this and still keep the information confidential. The Wyoming Livestock Board is using a device where the inspector puts information into it verbally and then downloads that information. They are trying to be able to use premise ID and add the date to make a group lot number and then when the group is broken up, use the brands. They are currently working with 15 other states and possibly another 13 to find common ground where they can put together a plan for USDA to address the concerns.

Issues – continued

Jim Mickelson explained the Environmental Assessment issued by BLM. This is the one where they want the 21 permittees to help build and maintain fences to protect aspen. He would like the Board to write a letter to BLM commenting they are not in favor of this plan. The comments are due February 28, 2006. **Corson make a motion to write a letter to the BLM office. The motion was amended by Hardy to read "Support the no-action alternative. Seconded by Otto. All voted in favor. Motion carried.** Helen asked Jim Mickelson to draft the letter for the Board's signature. John told the Board they need to send a copy to Bob Bennett.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Jones, President

Date

Attachment:
Attendance sheet
Conservation District Appointment